

Code of Discipline (Behaviour Policy)
Of
Scoil Muire Bannrion
(Reviewed June 2010)

1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This policy was formulated during the 09-10 school year and was reviewed by the whole school staff in 04 June 10. It is review of a policy first formulated during the 01-02 school year. The Principal, Seán Fitzgerald, led and co-ordinated this review

2. RATIONALE:

A Code of Discipline is necessary to ensure an orderly climate for learning in Scoil Muire Bannrion. It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:

- A. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- B. The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- C. The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- D. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
- E. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT OF THE SCHOOL

In line with our ethos and mission statement Scoil Muire Bannrion strives to create a harmonious environment where every pupil is valued and nurtured to achieve its potential and to enhance the co-operation between parent, pupil and staff

4. AIMS

To adopt a positive approach to correction and discipline, thereby appealing to each child's better nature in encouraging an acceptable standard of behaviour.

5. CONTENTS

1) REASON FOR GOOD DISCIPLINE:

To create and secure an ordered environment in the school, which will facilitate the educational, oral, emotional and social development of all pupils.

2) GENERAL EXPECTATIONS OF PUPILS:

Children are expected to show respect and to be polite and mannerly to their teachers, visitors and each other at all times.

Children are expected to obey all teachers on the staff and not just their own teacher and ancillary staff.

Honesty and truthfulness are expected from all pupils.

Children are expected to be punctual in attending school.

Children are expected to do their homework and schoolwork to the best of each child's ability.

Each child should have respect for his own property as well as the property of others.

Children are expected to help in keeping school and school grounds clean and litter free.

The school encourages healthy eating habits for children—fresh fruit, yoghurt, quality sandwiches and non-sugar drinks.

3) SPECIFIC SCHOOL RULES:

See Appendix A

4) PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH MISBEHAVIOUR

Class teacher will deal with most misbehaviour. In cases where a child continues to misbehave the following procedure will apply.

1. Correction by class teacher.
2. If misbehaviour continues, class teacher will send for parents. If misbehaviour continues - the teacher will bring the child to the principal who will issue a warning to the child. If the misbehaviour continues beyond this the principal will send for the parents and will discuss the problems with the child present if this is appropriate
3. If misbehaviour persists a parent may be instructed to accompany the child on his next visit to the school with the instruction that the child may not return to his own classroom or the playground until he can be accompanied by a parent.
4. If misbehaviour further persists the pupil and parent will come before a council of discipline in the school - made up of Principal, class teacher and one other teacher.

5. If no improvement follows this, the matter of the child's suspension will be taken up with the Board of Management. The Board of Management may authorize the Principal to impose suspension in accordance with Dept. of Educ. Rules for repeated serious or continued misbehaviour.
6. The following are among sanctions which may be used in the event of a child being repeatedly bold:
 - (a) Extra homework i.e. written exercises or school rules.
 - (b) Withdrawals of privileges e.g. play, breaks, lunchtime detention, and occasional loss of favourite school activities.
 - (c) Classroom isolation--particularly where the child is disrupting the work of the other children and their teacher.
 - (d) Told not to return to school unless accompanied by a parent.
 - (e) Parents may be requested to take their child from the school yard during break time/lunchtime when a child repeatedly hurts other children and continues to be an unacceptable risk in the playground following repeated efforts to remove risk. (where a parent does not accept this sanction it will entail further suspension for the child -in accordance with Dept. of Education rules-until a satisfactory arrangement is achieved)
 - (f) For a single instance of serious misbehaviour e.g. an attack on another child or aggression towards the teacher the principal will be contacted immediately. The principal will usually involve parents on such an occasion. In certain such cases the child may be suspended without warning - pending the earliest possible consultation with parents.**

5) INVOLVING PARENTS IN MANAGEMENT OF PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR

Parents will be kept fully informed from the outset of instances of serious misbehaviour on the part of their children. It is better to involve parents at an early stage than as a last resort.

- The class teacher makes the initial contact re misbehaviour through the medium of the School Journal. If misbehaviour is of a serious nature the initial contact will be made by the Principal.
- When parents come to discuss their child's behaviour they are put at their ease to maximise a co-operative approach.
- The child may be present for part of this meeting but this is at the discretion of the class teacher/principal.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have concerns. They may do so by making an appointment to see their child's teacher/principal.

6) MANAGING AGGRESSIVE OR VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

The following strategies are used for dealing with aggressive or violent behaviour

- Children who are emotionally disturbed are immediately referred for psychological assessment.
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS
- In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself or the safety of other pupils or staff the child is temporary excluded while consultation with SENO and/or EWO takes place about appropriate resourcing or alternative placement.

7) SUSPENSION/EXPULSION PROCEDURES

a. Suspension

The BOM of Scoil Muire Banríon has the authority to suspend a pupil and has formally delegated this authority to the Principal in writing.

b. Grounds for Suspension

The grounds for suspending a pupil are as follows;

- The pupil's behaviour has a serious detrimental effect on the education of others
- The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. Suspension may be part of an agreed plan to address the pupil's behaviour to;

- Enable the school to set behavioural goals with the pupil and parents
- Give the school an opportunity to plan other interventions Impress on both pupil and parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

c. Procedures in respect of Suspension

Scoil Muire Banríon is required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a pupil. This entails that the school:

- Informs parent and pupil
- Gives parents and pupil an opportunity to respond
- Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of safety, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for suspension. The formal investigation should immediately follow the imposition of suspension. Parents must be notified and arrangements made to collect the pupil.

d. Periods of Suspension

A pupil will not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a longer period is necessary to achieve a particular objective. In such a case the matter must be referred to the BOM for approval.

The BOM should place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension.

The BOM will formally review any proposal to suspend a pupil where such a suspension would bring the total number of days to twenty or more in any one school year.

Any such suspension is subject to appeal under Sec 29 of the Education Act

e. Appeals

The BOM should offer an opportunity to appeal the Principal's decision to suspend a pupil. In the case of decisions made by the BOM the appeals process is provided by the Patron. Sec 29 Appeals are made to the Sec General of Dept of Education & Science.

f. Implementing the suspension

The Principal will notify the parents and pupil in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm

- The period of suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for suspension
- Any study programme to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school, including and commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parents
- Provisions for appeal to the BOM
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Dept of Educ & Science (Education Act 1998, Sec 29).

g. Grounds for removal of suspension

A suspension may be removed if the BOM decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Sec General directs it be removed following an appeal under Sec 29

h. Returning to School After Suspension

- A pupil returning to school after suspension must be accompanied by a Parent or Legal guardian.
- A commitment to conform to the Code of Discipline and school rules must be given by the pupil and that commitment be supported by the Parents or Guardians

i. Records & Reporting (Suspension)

Formal written records are kept of:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision making process

- The decision and the rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and conditions attached
- The Principal will report all suspensions to the BOM, with reasons for and the duration of each suspension
- The Principal will report suspension to NEWB in accordance with reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act sec21 21 (4)(a)).

8) Expulsion

Only the board of Management of Scoil Muire Banríon has the authority to expel a pupil and will not be delegated.

a. Grounds for Expulsion

- The pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of disruption to the education of others.
- The pupil's continued presence constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety of others
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property
- The grounds may be similar to the grounds for suspension but the school believe that, having tried a series of interventions, they have exhausted all possibilities of changing the pupil's behaviour.

b. Factors to be considered prior to Expulsion

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether Expulsion is an appropriate response
- The possible impact of expulsion

c. Procedures in respect of Expulsion - see (Ch 12 Developing a Code of Behaviour, Guidelines for Schools - NEWB)

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- A recommendation to the BOM by the Principal
- Consideration by the BOM of the Principal's recommendation and hold a hearing
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Consultations arranged by EWO
- Confirmation of the decision to expel

d. Appeals

- A parent/guardian may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary Department of Education and Skills (sec 29 Education Act 1998). An appeal may also be brought by the NEWB on behalf of the student.

9) SCHOOL RECORDS

a. Class

Class teacher keeps a record of serious misbehaviour occurring in his/her class in the pupil's personal file

b. Playground

Serious misbehaviour in playground is referred to the Principal if it cannot be dealt with by the teachers on yard -duty. The Principal keeps a detailed record of all pupils' misbehaviour that is sent to him.

c. School Records

Personal file which also contain record of pupils' misbehaviour are kept on file for seven years until that pupil becomes an adult.

10) PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFICATION OF PUPILS ABSENCES

- 1) Scoil Muire Banríon strives to promote good attendance by
 - a. Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment
 - b. Acknowledging/rewarding good or improved attendance
 - c. Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils
 - d. Adapting the class and school timetables to make it more attractive to attend and to be on time
 - e. Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.
- 2) Parents/guardians send in a note informing teachers in writing of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence. These notes signed and dated and are kept by each class teacher
- 3) The school uses the standard forms to report on pupil absences to the National Education Welfare Board? (*See forms on www.newb.ie*)

11) REFERENCES TO OTHER POLICIES

The following policies support and enhance Scoil Muire Banríon's Code of Discipline:

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Record keeping
- Health & Safety
- Equality
- Special Educational Needs

6. **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

The practical indicators of the success of this policy are as follows:

- Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils

7. **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

a. **Board of Management**

1. Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
2. Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
3. Ratify the code.

b. **Principal**

1. Promote a positive climate in the school.
2. Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
3. Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

c. **Teachers**

Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.

1. Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
2. Recognise and affirm good work.
3. Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
4. Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
5. Be courteous, consistent and fair.
6. Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
7. Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
8. Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
9. Provide support for colleagues.
10. Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

d. **Pupils' Responsibilities**

1. Attend school regularly and punctually.
2. Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
3. Show respect for all members of the school community.

4. Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
5. Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
6. Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
7. Include other pupils in games and activities.
8. Bring correct materials/books to school.
9. Follow school and class rules.

e. Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities

Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.

1. Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
2. Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
3. Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
4. Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
5. Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.

8. IMPLEMENTATION DATE

This policy is currently being implemented.

9. TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW

This policy will be again be reviewed early in 2012

10. RATIFICATION & REVIEW

This policy was ratified by the BOM on 14th July 2010 and communicated fully and clearly to the parents as per Circ 20/90

Signed: *Cyril O'Neill*

Chairman Board of Management

Reference Section

- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23(1 -5), 24 (1-5)
- Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d))
- Circular 20/90 on Discipline (DES web site www.irlgov.ie/educ). Also in CPSMA Handbook
- Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. (DES website). Deals with appeals under the following headings:
 - (1) Permanent exclusion from a school
 - (2) Suspension
 - (3) Refusal to enrol
- Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour (National Education Welfare Board) *Draft edition published for consultation in 2007*
- Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (1993) available on DES website
- Report to the Minister of Education Niamh Breathnach, T.D. on Discipline in Schools. Maeve Martin, 1997. Ch. 4 p.56-61 Recommendations for Schools
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
- Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2007. CPSMA: A suggested Code of Behaviour & Discipline for National Schools
- INTO (2004) Managing Challenging Behaviour: Guidelines for Teachers
- INTO (2006) Towards Positive Behaviour in Primary Schools
- INTO (1995) Enhancing Self Esteem
- The Education Act 1998. The Education Welfare Act 2000. Questions and Answers, INTO
- The Principal's Legal Handbook Oliver Mahon B.L. IVEA 2002 Ch. 2 School Discipline
- Responding to Bullying. First Steps for Teachers. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
- Investigating and Resolving Bullying in Schools. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
- Stop it! Steps to Address Bullying. Wexford Education Network. Wexford Area Partnership. Phone: 053 23994
- Working towards a Whole School Policy on Self-Esteem and Positive Behaviour. Jenny Mosley. Positive Press 2001
- Working Together - to promote positive behaviour in classrooms, CEDR, Mary Immaculate College of Education
- Achieving Positive Behaviour. A Practical Guide. Patricia Dwyer. Marino

Appendix A: Specific School Rules of Scoil Muire Barrion

1. School gates officially open at 9.00 a.m. and school begins at 9.20 a.m. for all classes. Children should line up with their classes in a quiet orderly way when the bell rings at the end of each school break. They should then walk to their classroom in an orderly single file.
 2. Running playing or sliding in corridors, cloakrooms and toilets is forbidden in the interests of safety.
 3. **Rough play, kicking, pushing or hitting other children is strictly forbidden. (If a child has a problem he should always tell a teacher and must never try to hurt another child -for any reason.**
 4. Bad language and name calling will not be tolerated.
 5. **Bullying: The school takes a very serious view of bullying. Bullying can take the form of striking, kicking, damage to property, demands for money and sweets etc. threats, teasing, name calling, threatening notes, exclusion and any action that sets out to frighten or hurt another child. The school has a policy of protecting each and every child from bullying and will take very firm action, including discussion with parents and sanctions which may include suspension. (See separate comprehensive school policy statement on bullying—copy supplied or available from the school on request)**
 6. Crisps and similarly packaged snacks are not allowed in school because of the litter problem that they create and in the promotion of healthy eating habits.
 7. Cycling is not allowed in school grounds.
 8. A child may not leave the playground or return to any classroom during break-time, until he/she has particular permission from a teacher.
 9. Children are not allowed to play or walk on school lawns,
 10. Children are allowed on playground grass area if ground is dry and with teacher's permission.
 11. **Coats, jumpers, lunchboxes, flasks, P.E. gear etc. should be clearly labelled with child's name.**
 12. Children should wear full school uniform to school every day. **Uniform**;- Navy round neck jumper with crest, red polo shirt with crest and navy track suit bottom. Children should wear runners on PE day.
 13. With a view to keeping the school and school grounds tidy, litter should be put in the bins provided.
- 13 Mobile Phones-----Children with mobile phones may not use them OR HAVE THEM SWITCHED ON DURING SCHOOL HOURS INCLUDING BREAK TIMES---or at any time within school premises. Children who break this rule will have the phone taken up. It will be kept in the school for a parent/guardian to collect.**

14. Children should have their homework journals signed by parents if teachers request it.
15. Children should bring a note from parents or have a note written in homework journals if:
 - (a) a parent wishes the child to leave school or school grounds during school hours.
 - (b) a child has been absent from school.
 - (c) parents wish children to stay indoors at break-time because of coughs, colds etc.
 - (d) a child cannot wear his uniform on a particular day.
 - (e) a child, for whatever reason, has been unable to do or complete homework.

Each child should have a school diary that contains a copy of school rules

12) GENERAL POINTS:

- a) **It is important to stress that most children *are well behaved*.**
- b) Misbehaviour in a few seriously interferes with continuity and the quality of teaching and learning in a classroom.
- c) Where a child is repeatedly in trouble, the school will endeavour to find medical or social causes.
- d) **It is very much in the interest of each child that parents are seen to be supportive of the school in the area of discipline.** It is understandable that parents may feel they need to clarify issues with the school from time to time. However it is important that such a need should not result in communicating a negative feeling to the child. If this were to happen it might result in the child having a bad or disrespectful attitude towards the school.
- e) Parents should feel free to talk to their child's teacher or the School Principal at any time during the school year.
(Such meetings should be by appointment in the interests of ensuring the safety of the other children in the teacher's class, and to ensure the availability of the teacher/Principal. i.e. ring the school Secretary at 046 9731478 to arrange a meeting)

There will be a formal Parent/Teacher Meeting during the school year.

NB: The Board of Management of the school cannot accept responsibility for children on school premises or grounds outside of school hours.